

held an important position upon the board of control of the aforesaid association, and was a power of good in the community. Her place in church was never unoccupied, and she took an active part in all the charities connected with the church, but she was one of those good Samaritans who unselfishly devote their whole lives to soliciting donations, and have, therefore, no time to subscribe themselves. She was in the enjoyment of a moderate—some people said a very splendid—annuity, most of which she saved for the future benefit of the Crown. Like most good people, she was annoyed by many undeserving poor relations and sycophants—mercenary creatures, who would have intruded upon her privacy and exchequer had they dared. But she renounced them all, such was her love for the Sovereign-lady who is the ostensible head of the British constitution. Worthy woman! In consequence of these estimable traits, some envious person made her the subject of vulgar jests, and, metaphorically speaking, many a time and oft was she rebaptized, over Knobbing tea-tables, with names neither complimentary nor elegant. This negative kind of pen portraiture might be indefinitely pursued, and, indeed, I think, if it was more generally employed by some of our leading novelists, it would greatly assist in rendering some of their metaphysical, psychical, etc., creations a little more intelligent.

## III.

My purpose in this sketch is to refute the vile calumnies cast upon an innocent and highly respectable woman, and I will endeavour to present my brief in the briefest possible manner. From the mass of conclusive evidence before me, I select one anecdote, the relation of which will, I think, establish my case beyond all further controversy.

It was but a few days after the conversation faithfully reported at the commencement of this history, and while the incident was still fresh in my memory, that I was in London, one afternoon, on business. Whilst standing at the corner of one of the great crowded thoroughfares, waiting for a break in the traffic to allow me to cross to the other side of the street, I suddenly became aware of the presence of Miss Savall at my side. It was a cold, wet, miserable November day, and the lady was too goloshed and water-proofed to recognize me. At this moment a very small, wizened face looked up into hers, with a piteous request for alms. It belonged to a ragged young gamin, of Lilliputian dimensions, whose tattered garments offered quite inadequate protection against the inclemency of the weather. He carried in one hand the insignia of his office—an institution, by the way, quite peculiar to John Bull's great metropolis—a stumpy little birch broom—whilst with the other he incessantly touched his bare and shaggy little head.

"Pity poor Jack, mar'm. Gim'me a copper, please, mar'm."

Miss Savall, as is customary with all well-bred folk, when refusing alms, had eyes only for the opposite side of the street, and the ceaseless traffic. It seemed as if there would never be a break, and "poor Jack" still stood, with dogged persistence—the outcome either of his professional training, or a real despair—begging for a copper. "I've 'ad nuffin' to eat all day, mar'm; s'elp me 'e vins I ain't. Do gimme a penny?"

At last a policeman stepped into the middle of the road and arrested the stream of vehicles. Miss Savall was just preparing, skirts in hand, to make a rush for it (ladies are always precipitate where there is no danger) across Jack's clean swept crossing, when his appealing, dirty little face touched her heart. A bright idea struck her. Her virtuous skirts fell from her hand, and after a frantic dive into her pocket, she produced her purse, and taking therefrom a bright little silver coin, handed it to poor Jack. Astounded at such munificence, he invoked numberless blessings upon her head, with a volubility perfectly impossible to any but a boy educated on the streets of London. She modestly rebuked him, and once again, gathering up her skirts, resumed her journey, with the happy, unconscious air of a person

detected with his hand in another's watch pocket. Charity in public always make delicate souls feel criminal.

When once his benefactress was fairly swallowed up in the crowd, Jack darted across the street, under the horses' noses, to a cook-shop opposite, and disappeared in the steam emanating from the different viands prepared, or in the course of preparation, within. Cook-shop edibles are in an eternal course of preparation.

I had gone but a very few steps, when Jack suddenly passed me, in charge of a policeman, looking the very picture of misery. He was not crying, and he did not heed the laughs of the little tail of idlers, who are at once attracted by an affair of this description. He proclaimed his innocence with all the fluent oratory of his class, but I could see that he had not the *insouciance* of guilt—there was a touch of real despair in his appeal. Astonished at this sudden change in his fortunes, I stepped up to the officer and enquired what was the youngster's offence.

"It's none o' your business," replied that gentlemen, with professional courtesy, "so don't meddle."

I take no credit to myself, but I thereupon determined to make it my business, and so followed in the wake of the procession to the police station, and when the gaping crowd was left at the entrance, I mounted the stone steps and entered the office.

When the boy was placed in the dock, before the inspector, he was charged with attempting to pass counterfeit coin. The policeman handed a coin to his superior officer, which I asked permission to examine. A fat man, in a greasy apron, now came forward and explained that he was the proprietor of the cook-shop, and that was the coin upon which he made the charge. I took it in my hand for a moment. It was a sixpenny piece! The boy looked at me imploringly, and said, half aloud: "It's a darned snider, sir." A very cursory examination of the coin made me give inward corroborative evidence, and the worst and suspicious part of my nature suggested that I had seen it before.

"It's all right, sir," said I to the inspector. "The boy is as innocent as you are. I'm the real culprit; I gave him this sixpence, without knowing it to be a bad one. Here's my card." The potentiality of a card is wonderful. I had to burden my shoulders with this act of charity, because to have imputed it to another person might not have been sufficiently conclusive to obtain the boy's release, at any rate, not until he had spent a night in a cold cell.

"Oh, very well, sir. I'm very sorry that you have had so much trouble." (My gray hairs, it will be understood, obtained for me this certificate of respectability.) "You can take the boy; I'll keep the coin."

Upon regaining the street, Jack's eyes filled with tears for the first time, and looking up into my face, he said, with a slight huskiness:

"Sir, you're a trump, that's wot you air! I should ev got six months, as sure as eggs is eggs. You're a trump!—and, say, don't you know a thing or two?"

Placing a few coppers in his dirty little palm, I left him at his crossing, and told him to call at my office next day.

That boy's curious blessing—for it was a blessing—gave me an appetite for my lonely tea, and I have no doubt that it was with increased relish that the philanthropical Miss Savall sipped her Souchong and ate her water cress that evening. I do hope the recording angel was not neglecting his duties that miserable afternoon, if only for the utter discomfiture of the good lady's enemies upon the Day of Judgment.

\* \* \* \* \*

Jack, the reader will be pleased to hear, is now progressing favourably on board Her Majesty's ship Warspite. I went to see him last "Speech-day," and had the gratification of witnessing him walk up, before the visitors and whole ship's company assembled, to receive the medal for good conduct.

Quod erat demonstrandum.

## THE PILGRIMAGE TO KEVLAAR.

TRANSLATED FROM HEINE.

## I.

The mother stood at her lattice,  
The son lay on his bed;  
"Come, gaze at the holy pilgrims,  
Wilhelm, arise," she said.

"I am so ill, my mother,  
I scarce can see or hear;  
On my dead Margaret musing,  
My heart, alas! is drear."

"Arise, we will go to Kevlaar,  
The book and rosary take;  
The Mother of God will heal thee,  
'Thy poor heart must not break."

The pilgrims wave church banners,  
And chant in a solemn tone;  
And so the procession passes  
Through the Rhenish town Cologne.

In the crowd the mother follows—  
She leads her son, and he  
Joins with her in the chanting,  
"Blesséd be thou, Marie!"

## II.

The Mother of God at Kevlaar  
Is dazzlingly arrayed:  
To-day she is busy healing  
The sick who have sought her aid.

They lay their many offerings  
Before her shrine in prayer—  
Limbs, feet and hands all modelled  
In wax-work clean and fair.

And whoso a wax hand offers  
Is cured, if his hand is maimed,  
While he who a wax foot bringeth  
Is healed, though his foot was lamed.

But the mother took a taper,  
And fashioned thereof a heart;  
"Take that to the Holy Virgin,  
And she will ease thy smart."

The son knelt down to the Virgin,  
And offered the heart with sighs;  
A prayer broke forth from his spirit,  
And tears broke forth from his eyes:

"O Virgin, Queen of Heaven,  
Thou pure and holy maid,  
To thee I breathe my sorrows,  
For thou my woe can'st aid.

I dwelt with my tender mother  
In the Rhenish town, Cologne,  
That many hundred churches  
And chapels fair doth own.

And near us dwelt my Margaret,  
But dead she lieth now—  
A waxen heart I bring thee,  
My wounded heart heal thou!

Heal thou my heart that is broken,  
And, singing fervently,  
I will pray both late and early,  
Blesséd be thou, Marie!"

## III.

The sick son and his mother  
Slept in a lowly room,  
When lo! the Virgin lightly  
Stepped inwards, through the gloom.

She bent above the sick man,  
And on his heart did lay  
Her gentle fingers softly,  
And smiled and went away.

The mother saw in a vision  
What happened in the dark,  
And wakened from her slumber,  
For the dogs did loudly bark.

Her son lay stretched before her,  
And the light of morning red  
Fell on his cold, pale features—  
The breath of life had fled!

Then, her hands the mother folded,  
She felt, she scarce knew how—  
And she whispered low, devoutly,  
"O Mary, blest be thou!"

GEO. MURRAY.

The smallest church in the world is on the Isle of Wight. It is of Saxon architecture, 24 feet long, 11 feet wide, and barely high enough for a tall man to stand upright.